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Who will Come from East and West?Observations on Matt.8.11-12 - Luke 13. 28-29

Dale C. Allison, Jr.

In his influential study, Jesus' Promise to the Nations, Joachim Jeremias drew two major conclusions. / He claimed (i) that Jesus limited his own preaching to Israel and forbade his disciples to preach to non-Jews and (ii) that Jesus promised the Gentiles a share in salvation because he looked forward to their eschatological pilgrimage to Zion. In making this second and crucial point, Jeremias placed great weight upon Matt.8.11-12, which reads: "I tell you, many will come from the east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness." /2 These words were taken to be authentic and to envisage the rejection of the Jews (= "the sons of the kingdom") on the one hand and the acceptance of the Gentiles (= "many from east and west") on the other. /3

Jeremias' interpretation of Matt.8.11-12 and its Lukan parallel has become a commonplace of contemporary scholarship. Whether NT exegetes are discussing Jesus or Q, Matthew or Luke, they almost always understand those coming from east and west to be Gentiles while the sons of the kingdom are accordingly identified with Jews. /4 These equations, however, are not in fact necessary or even obvious, and some scholars have had other ideas. A.H. McNeile, in his commentary on the First Gospel, contended that "in the Lord's mouth the words [sons of the kingdom] can mean 'all Jews who trust in their Judaism,' in contrast not necessarily with Gentiles, as Mt. understands it.....but with Jews whose character truly fitted them for the Kingdom....." /5 More recently, N.Q. King has argued that, in its Lukan context, Luke 13.28-29 has to do with saved and unsaved Jews; /6 and E.P. Sanders has acknowledged the possibility that, on Jesus' lips, Matt.8.11-12 par. was about the ingathering of the Jewish diaspora, not the pilgrimage of the Gentiles. /7

Given the importance of Matt.8.11-12 par. in recent discussion of Jesus' thought about the Gentiles, it is rather disconcerting to learn that Jeremias and others have not established that the "many" are really non-Jews. Jeremias asserted that this follows from the contrast with "the sons of the kingdom" and from OT prophecies about Gentiles. /8 But neither alleged reason is, as we shall see, very forceful. Furthermore, there are a number of signs which point in precisely the opposite direction. My own conclusion, which I hope to uphold in this essay, is that when Jesus referred to people coming from east and west he was probably thinking about the diaspora. If this is indeed the case, the passage has nothing at all to do with the vexed issue of Jesus and the Gentiles.

(1) The first observation to be made about the text is that, in both its Matthaean and Lukan forms, it does not explicitly mention either Jews or Gentiles. In Matthew, neither the "many" nor the "sons of the kingdom" are identified. The same is true of the subjects in Luke, "they" and "you." That most scholars nonetheless think in terms of a Jew/Gentile antithesis is undoubtedly due to the Matthean context. As it stands, Matt.8.11-12 belongs to the story of the healing of the Roman centurion's servant or son (Matt.8.5-13); and the saying immediately follows Jesus' remark, "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." Most readers understand Matt.8.11-12 in the light of this statement about faith, or rather its lack, in Israel. So those who will come from east and west and sit with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob at the messianic banquet are naturally taken to be people like the centurion, which means Gentiles. It must be stressed, however, that Luke 7.1-10, which is Luke's version of the story in Matt.8.5-13, contains no counterpart to Matt.8.11-12, and, further, that the Lukan parallel to the latter appears in Luke 13.23-30, a short collection of originally independent sayings. Thus it is usual for Matt.8.11-12 = Luke 13.29-30 to be assigned to and for its Matthean context to be regarded as secondary.

/9.

(2) There are some pronounced differences between Matt.8.11-12 and Luke 13.28-29. Fortunately, most of these are not significant for our purposes. One difference, however, cannot be ignored. Matthew refers to many coming "from east and west", Luke to those who come "from east and west and north and south." Whose wording is original? Here the critics differ, and there is no room for certainty. Whereas Luke (or a transmitter of Q^{Lk}) might have added "and north and south" in order to stress the theme of universalism /10 or in order to gain an allusion to Ps.107.3 (see below), Matthew, in accordance with his tendency to abbreviate, might have omitted the words as superfluous. /11

Because the status of Luke's "and north and south" remains in doubt, it is incumbent to investigate the background of both phrases, "from east and west" and "from east and west and north and south." To take the latter first, if it stood in Q, it was, as the commentators generally recognize, almost certainly intended to allude to Ps. 107.3, which in the RSV reads: "and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and the south." Unhappily, there is some doubt as to whether this is a correct translation. The Hebrew and the LXX both have "from the east and from the west, from the north and from overseas" (ûmîyyâm; kai thalassēs). The RSV Committee, it seems, inferred that the MT is corrupt. Their English presupposes a Hebrew text with ûmîyyāmîn (= "and from the south"). Are they to be followed? Although one always hesitates to emend without manuscript authority, the ûmîyyâm of the Masoretic text seems redundant; for "from the sea" is naturally understood to signify "from the west" (= from the Mediterranean) and "from the west" has already been used. It is therefore, possible that, through corruption, ûmîyyāmîn became ûmîyyâm, and that Ps.107.3 originally had "from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south." Indeed, perhaps a Hebrew or Greek text with this reading was known to Luke or to

his tradition. Another possibility is that Āmīyyā is original but referred not to the Mediterranean but to "the southern seas" (cf. the targum), that is, the Gulf of Aqabah (cf. 2 Chr.8.17), /12 In any event, the link between Luke 13.28-29 and Ps.107.3 seems firm.

How does that affect the exegesis of Luke 13.28-29? Here are the first three verses of Ps. 107

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures for ever! Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble³ and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south(ern sea).

These words introduce a Psalm of thanksgiving. Whether, as many have supposed, vv2-3 are a secondary interpolation the Psalm as it stands refers to Jewish pilgrims or immigrants coming to Palestine: those who gather from the four points of the compass are God's scattered people. /13 Gentiles are not in the picture at all. What follows? Whoever catches the scriptural allusion in Luke 13.28-29 and knows Ps.107.3 in its OT context will immediately see in the mind's eye an image of Jewish exiles returning to their land. One must ask: Does not Luke 13.28-29 allude to Ps.107.3 because someone wanted to turn thoughts towards the ingathering of the Jewish dispersion?

(3)We must next raise the possibility that Matthew's wording, not Luke's, preserves Q. How should one interpret "from the east and from the west"? The two directions commonly occur in Jewish texts in connexion with the return of Jews to their land. Consider the following:

Isa.43.5: "Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you."

Zech 8.7: "Thus says the Lord of hosts: Behold, I will save my people from the east country and from the west country."

Bar.4.37: "Behold, your sons are coming, whom you sent away; they are coming, gathered from east and west, at the

word of the Holy One, rejoicing in the glory of God." Bar.5.5: "Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height and look toward the east, and see your children gathered from west and east, at the word of the Holy one, rejoicing that God has remembered them."

Ps. Solomon, 11.2: "Stand on a high place, O Jerusalem, and look at your children, from the east and west assembled together by the Lord."

1 Enoch 57.1: "And it happened afterward that I had another vision of a whole array of chariots loaded with people; and they were advancing upon the air from the east and from the west until midday."

Also notable is Deut.30.4 LXX: "Though your diaspora be from one border of the heaven to the other, from thence the Lord your God shall deliver you."

On the other hand - and this must be emphatically stressed - , "east and west" is not, as far as I have been able to determine, even once associated with the eschatological incursion of the Gentiles. /14

That "east and west" should be used with reference to the Jewish dispersion is understandable. The phrase itself calls to mind the diaspora. This is because, in the biblical tradition, with its Palestinian perspective, "east" often denotes Assyria or Babylon (as in Isa.46.11; Sib.Or. 5.113; Assumption of Moses. 3.1, 13-14) and "Egypt" can be used as the antithesis of "East," thus functioning as the equivalent of "west" (e.g. 1 Kings 4.30; Sibylline Oracles, 5.112-113) /15 This matters so much because there was a concentration of exiled Jews in the east in Babylon and in the west in Egypt.

Confirmation of the point I am making can be found in those passages in which the exiled return not from "east" and "west" but from "Assyria and Egypt." In Isa.27.13 there is this: "And in that day a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were lost in the land of Assyria and those who were driven out to the land of Egypt will come and worship the Lord on the holy mountain at Jerusalem " (cf.11.11). Comparable are Hosea 11.11 ("they shall come trembling like birds from the land of Assyria.") and Zechariah 10.,10 ("I will

bring them home from the land of Egypt and gather them from Assyria"). It is plain that, in connexion with the hope for dispersed Jews, "east and west" and "Assyria and Egypt" were interchangeable expressions. The implications for Matt.8.11-12 are obvious.

(4) The next consideration which causes one to wonder about the common interpretation of Matt.8.11-12 par. is this: the pilgrimage of the nations is never in the OT, conceived as a judgment upon Israel or those in the land. On the contrary, the coming of the Gentiles always serves, as D. Zeller has seen, to exalt Zion. /16 So the interpretation of Jeremias et alii requires that Jesus turned a traditional motif on its head and employed the pilgrimage theme in order to deny Jewish hopes rather than confirm them. But how likely is this? Jesus himself, if we trust the synoptic testimony, looked forward to the fulfilment of God's promises to Israel. /17

(5) Notwithstanding the tradition of a Gentile pilgrimage to Zion and the optimistic prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah and Jeremiah, one can hardly assume that Jesus' hearers would have taken for granted the eschatological salvation of the nations. In Ezekial; Sirach.36; the War Scroll (1QM); the Rule of the Congregation (1 QSa); Jubilees.20; 4 Ezra 13; and Mekilta on Exod.21.30 (R. Ishmael), the nations are destroyed or lost. In 1 Enoch 90.30 only some repent. There was, therefore, no one Jewish opinion on the ultimate fate of non-Jews. This raises a question. Would it have been natural for Jesus' hearers to have understood a prediction about people coming from east and west and banqueting with the patriarchs to refer to redeemed Gentiles? If Jesus frequently addressed himself to the topic and made plain his own opinion one might be able to return an affirmative response. But where else in the synoptics does Jesus speak of Gentiles streaming into the land? /18 What in Jesus' message would have encouraged his audience to construe the "many" as non-Jews? And how could Jesus have expected people steeped in the OT to equate those "from the east and west" (and from north and south) with Gentiles

instead of Jews of the diaspora?

(6) Jewish expectation, as already indicated, looked forward not only to the eschatological pilgrimage of the Gentiles but also to the eschatological gathering of Israel. [See already Isa.35.10; 49.6; and Ezekial 34.37; also the passages cited above under observation (3)]. For later texts which prophesy or assume that the lost ten tribes (cf. 2 Kings 17.1-6; Josephus, Antiquities 11. 131-133) will someday return to Palestine [see 2 Macc.1. 27-28; 2.18; Sirach 36;48.10; IQM 2.1-3; 4QpIsa^d line 7; 11QTemple 18.14-16; 57.5-6; Ps. Solomon 8.28;17/44; Philo, De Praem. 117; 165-172; 4 Ezra 13.32-50; 2 Baruch 77.17-87; T.Jos. 19.2-12 (Armenian); m. Sanhedrin.10.3; t.Sanh. 13.10 and b.Sanh. 110b] There may even have existed a Jewish apocalypse which described the life of the hidden lost tribes and foretold their coming to the land of Judah. /19 Clearly the hope for a renewed Israel was a very real aspect of Jewish hope. /20 Jesus' adoption of the widespread expectation may be indicated by his calling of the twelve disciples, symbolizing the eschatological restoration of the twelve tribes (so recently Sanders), as well as by the probability that he spoke of his closest followers "judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (see n.17). This opens up the possibility of interpreting Matt.8.10-12 as a statement about the end restoration of Jews to their homeland.

(7) G.R. Beasley-Murray has written: "There are.... many passages in the OT that speak of the nations making their way to Zion at the end of the age to pay homage to Yahweh and to Israel (e.g., Isa 2.1ff), but in none of these is mention made of the nations sharing in the feast of the kingdom of God. On the other hand, Isaiah 25.6ff., which provides the classic description of the feast for the nations given by God, makes no mention of the peoples streaming from all parts of the world to Zion...." /21 Beyond these facts, in Ps. 107; Isa. 25-27; and Ezek 37-39 the motif of the pilgrimage of the diaspora Jews is brought into connexion with the messianic feats. Which is to say: while the Gentile

pilgrimage and the eschatological feast are not linked in the Tanak, the ingathering of scattered Israel and the eschatological feast are. Once again, therefore, the usual interpretation of Matt.8.10-12 is not what comes to mind to one steeped in the Bible. The festal imagery rather points to the theme of Israel's restoration.

(8) According to Jeremias, the "many" must be Gentiles because they are set over against the "sons of the kingdom." /22 This is scarcely compelling argument. Neither the "many" nor the "sons of the kingdom" appears in Luke's version of our logion, and they may not have belonged to the original. No less importantly even if the "sons of the kingdom" be reckoned an expression of Jesus, is it credible that he intended the words to refer to the Jews as a whole and thus, at least hyperbolically, consigned all Israel to hell? Jesus' disciples were Jews. He directed his mission to Jews (as Matt 10.5-6 and 15.24, whatever their origin, rightly presume; cf. Rom.15,8). And the gospels contain eschatological sayings which take for granted the presence of Jews in the kingdom (e.g. Matt.5.3 - the "poor" in Israel; 8.11 - Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; 10.23 - Jewish-Christian missionaries; 19.28 - the twelve Jewish disciples and the twelve tribes of Israel). Jesus, like Paul after him (cf. Rom.11), may well have hoped for the final redemption of "all Israel" (which is not to say the salvation of every single Jew; cf. m. Sanh. 10.1). However that may be, Matt.8.11-12, if dominical, can scarcely be about the damnation of all Jews. Jeremias' interpretation, according to which the saying is "devoid of hope for Israel," /23 can only be correct if one holds that it is a community product. /24

What is the alternative? Jesus, in all probability, intended to draw a stark contrast not between unbelieving Jews and believing Gentiles but between saved and unsaved Jews. Jesus believed that those who rejected him and his message would suffer judgement on the last day. /25 In particular, he delivered warnings to some of the Jewish leaders, including the Pharisees. When to this one adds that he evidently thought of such people as being wise and

pious in their own eyes (cf. Matt.23), might he not have ironically labelled them "sons of the kingdom" (if the phrase is original) and warned them of judgement? If Matt.8.11-12 par. was originally addressed to the Pharisees or to the Jerusalem establishment or to some other group of powerful religious Jews which Jesus perceived to be opposed to him, the text can be understood as yet one more example of the conviction that the first will be last, the last first (cf. Luke 6.20-26). The "sons of the kingdom" had not responded to Jesus and his preaching. They had remained complacent. Recall Matt.11.25-26 = Luke 10.21-22, according to which only the "babes" had received eschatological revelation while the "wise" rejected it. Interpreting Matt.8.11-12 par. in this light, the saying makes a tragic contrast between privileged and unprivileged Jews (cf. Luke 16.19-31). The "many" from east and west, that is, Jews who have not had the benefit of encountering Jesus, will find eschatological salvation while those who have heard the Messiah will not. The privileged will have their places taken by the under-privileged. "Many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness."

(9) Such an understanding of Matt.8.11-12 par. is consistent with other materials in the Jesus tradition. For example, if the logion is really about the eschatological ingathering of Jewish exiles, it harmonizes well with Jesus' attitude towards Eretz Israel. W.D. Davies shows that as far as we can gather, [Jesus] paid little attention to the relationship between Yahweh, Israel and the land." /26 In other words, Jesus apparently did not emphasize at all the role of the land in his teaching. Matt.8.11-12 par. accords with Davies' conclusions. While the saying does assume that geographical Israel will be the focus or center of certain eschatological events, it simultaneously negates any advantage which might be thought to accrue to dwelling in Palestine. /27 The "sons of the kingdom", although in the land, will nonetheless be cast out. Their living in Palestine will not, any more than their descent from Abraham (cf Matt.

3.9 par.), bring them sufficient merit. Quite the contrary. It is precisely those inside the borders of Israel, those who have been blessed with the Messiah's presence, who will face the more dire consequences.

Another point. It is easy to imagine Jesus drawing an ironic contrast between the dismal fate of his prestigious Palestinian opponents and the good fortune of unknown multitudes outside the land, who were no doubt thought by many to be inferior Jews (cf. m. Qidd.1.9-10; b.sota 14a; b.Ketub.111a). In Luke 14.15-24, the parable of the great banquet, those first invited turn down the invitations, after which the poor, the maimed, the blind, the lame and invalid come. Here those who should participate in the messianic feast lose their places to unlikely characters. This eschatological reversal, this overturning of the expected, runs throughout the Jesus tradition. It would hardly surprise to learn that Jesus, with the exaggerated rhetoric of prophetic antithesis, foretold a bright future for those in the diaspora, including the hidden lost tribes, while holding out damnation for the "righteous" (cf. Mark 2.17 par.), Jews or their leaders in the land who were confident that they would be the focus of God's end-time blessings.

In conclusion, Matt. 8.11-12 = Luke 13.28-29 was originally a prophecy about the eschatological ingathering of dispersed Jews. It took up this stock theme in order to threaten certain Jews in Israel with judgement. The saying had nothing at all to do with Gentiles. Passed down without a context, it was susceptible of being reinterpreted against the original sense. This unfortunately happened when the author of Matthew placed the logion in the middle of a pericope which contained a Jew/Gentile contrast. The new context suggested the identification of those from east and west with Gentiles. Whether this is in truth how the First Evangelist understood Matt.8.11-12 is not as certain as many have supposed. He may have inserted the verses simply because they pronounce a judgement upon the faithless within Israel. /28 But that issue aside, Matt.8.11-12 = Luke 13.28-29 can hardly be the key to unlocking the problem of what Jesus the Jew thought about Gentiles. /29

Notes

1. J. Jeremias, Jesus' Promise to the Nations (Philadelphia: Fortress 1982)
2. From Q. Compare Luke 13.28-29: "There you will weep and gnash your teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves will be cast out. And men will come from east and west, and from north and south and sit at table in the kingdom of God."
3. Promise, pp.55-63.
4. See the commentaries on Matthew and Luke. In church history the passage has usually been understood in either one of two ways. Many have thought the prophecy to symbolize the evangelization of the Gentiles, that is, the building up of the church throughout the world; so e.g. Ps.-Clem. Hom. 8.4 and Bernard of Clairvaux, Serm. super Cant. cant. 77.7. But others have maintained an eschatological and more literal interpretation; so e.g. Justin, Dial. 140; Ambrose, De bono mort. 12.53-54; Patrick, Ep. 18. Both interpretations equate the "many" with Gentiles.
5. A.H. McNeile, The Gospel according to St. Matthew (London: Macmillan, 1915), p.105
6. N.Q. King, "The 'Universalism' of the Third Gospel," in Studia Evangelica, Vol.1, ed. K. Aland et alii (TU 73; Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1959), pp.202-203
7. E.P. Sanders, Jesus and Judaism (Philadelphia: Fortress 1985), pp.119-120.
8. Promise, p.56, n.3, pp. 62-63.
9. U. Wegner, Der Hauptmann von Kafarnaum (WUNT 2/14; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck] 1985, pp3-5.
10. Cf. Acts 2.9-11. When universalism is in mind, "north and south and east and west" is more common than just "east and west." Recall the play upon Adam's name in Sib.Or. 3.24-26 and 2 Enoch. 30.13 (in Greek the four letters of Adam's name are taken to represent the four cardinal directions). Note also Gen.28.14; 1 Kings 7.25; Isa.43.5-6; and b.Sabb. 118b.
11. Also, to mention another possibility, if the First Evangelist detected an allusion to Ps.107.3, knew that Ps.107.3 is about Jews, yet wanted Matt.8.11-12 to say something about Gentiles, he could have struck "from north and south" to eliminate the scriptural reference.
12. So M. Dahood, Psalms III. 101-150 (AB 17a; NYork, Doubleday 1970) p.81
13. This interpretation is perhaps assumed in Psalms of Solomon 11.3-4: "Stand up, O Jerusalem, on high, and see your children who are all being gathered together from the east and from the west by the Lord; and from the north they are coming to the joy of their God, and from the distant islands God has gathered them." Note also the eschatological interpretation of Ps.107.3 in Midrash of the Psalms on 107.2-3; and that in Isa 43.5-6 the

Jewish diaspora lies in four directions, north, south, east and west (cf. Ezek.37.9).

4. J. Schlosser, Le règne de Dieu dans les dits de Jésus (2 vols.; EBib; Paris, J. Gabalda 1980), 2.621, writes: "Dans L'AT l'expression 'du levant et du couchant' se rencontre principalement en des textes annonçant le rassemblement des dispersés d' Israël et en des textes prônant sur la reconnaissance universelle de Jahvé." For the first point, he cites Isa.43.5; Zech.8.7; Ps.107(106).3; Baruch 4.37;5.5; Isa. 49.12; Jer.13.20;16.15; Psalms of Solomon 11.2-3; 1 Enoch 57.1; and for the second point Isa 25.6;59.19; Mal. 1.11; Ps.50(49).1; 113(112).3 for the second. The statement conceals the fact that the phrase is never used of Gentiles coming to the holy land. Also, none of the texts in the second group ever uses both "east" and "west."
5. In the Babylon Talmud "west" is used for Palestine; but that is a late development and represents a non-Palestinian perspective.
6. D. Zeller, "Das Logion Mt 8,11f/Lk 13.28f und das Motiv der 'Völkerwallfahrt,'" BZ 15 (1971), pp.222-37; 16(1972), pp. 84-93.
7. See esp. Sanders, Jesus, pp.77-119, 222-241. Both Matthew and Luke understood Matt.19.28 = Luke 22.30 to refer to the disciples ruling over Israel, and this interpretation also holds for Q; see D.C. Allison, "Gnilka on Matthew," Bib (forthcoming). Moreover, Sanders is probably correct in tracing the logion to Jesus, although many have thought otherwise
7. According to Jeremias, Promise, p63, "The Conception of the pilgrimage of the Gentiles is not confined to Matt.8.11 in the gospels, but finds frequent expression in the sayings of Jesus." His evidence consists of Matt.25.31-32 (but the reference here to "all the nations" is redactional; see J. Friedrich, Gott im Bruder? [CTM 7; Stuttgart: Calwer 1977], pp. 249-57); John 10.16 and 11.51-52 (can the mention of "other sheep not of this fold" and of "the children of God scattered abroad really be assigned to the historical Jesus?); Mark 11.17 (recent commentators tend to regard the mixed citation of Isa.56.7 [which reproduces the LXX] and Jer.7.11 (which also depends on the LXX) as a Markan insertion and doubt authenticity; see J. Gnilka, Das Evangelium nach Markus [2 vols.; EKKNT II; Zürich and Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger and Neukirchener 1978,1979]. 2.127; even if the saying is dominical, it need not be linked with the eschatological pilgrimage of the Gentiles); Matt.5.14 (Jeremias adopts Von Rad's suggestion that the city set on a hill is the new Jerusalem and then ties this into Jewish texts in which the light from the city of God brings the Gentiles to Jerusalem; but see W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison, Jr., A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew] 3 vols.; ICC Edinburgh, T&T Clark 1988ff.); John 7.37-38 (Jeremias links Jesus' saying about the living water with Rev.22.2, where the river of water of life is associated with the healing of the nations; but the association is made only in Revelation, and does John 7.37-38 preserve words of Jesus?); Mark 4.32 par. (Here Jeremias may be right: the nesting birds could be an allusion to Gentiles, and the parable goes back to Jesus); Mark 14.9 par. (Jeremias' attempt to interpret this in terms of an eschatological angelic summons to the

nations [cf. Mk 13.27; Rev. 14.6-7] fails because of the iterative sense of hopou eay and the attributing to Jesus of what is redactional; So Gnllka, Markus, 2: 225-226); and Mt 5.35 (one can hardly argue from the simple use of "the city of the great king" anything about Jesus' eschatological expectations, and in any case Matt.5.35 would appear to be a secondary addition to the core in 5.(33a) + 34a + 37;)see Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1.533. It needs not be denied that Jesus looked forward to the eschatological ingathering of the nations, for this is foretold in some OT texts, Mk 4.32 may assume such a belief, and the gospels contain no indication that Jesus expected the destruction of the Gentiles. But Jeremias' assertion about "frequent expression" holds neither for properly dominical materials or for the gospels as they stand.

19. See J.H. Charlesworth, The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research, (SCS 7, Missoula; Scholars Press 1976), pp.147-49.
20. Cf. W.D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism (rev.ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress 1980), pp.78-82.
21. G.R. Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Kingdom of God (London: Paternoster 1986), p.170
22. No conclusion can be drawn from the simple use of "many." For while polloi is used in the LXX of Gentiles (e.g. Isa.2.3), there are also texts which stress how "many" Jews are in the diaspora and how "many" will return to the land (e.g. Zech.10.8-12; 1 Enoch 57.1; 4 Ezra 13.39; 2 Baruch 77-87).
23. Promise, p.51.
24. Cf. J. Klausner, Jesus of Nazareth (London: Macmillan 1925), pp. 367-68
25. For a review of the issue see D.C. Allison, Jr., "Jesus and the Covenant," JSNT 29 (1987), pp.57-78)
26. W.D. Davies, The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine (Berkeley, University of California 1974), p.365.
27. Contrast the type of thinking found in 2 Baruch 29.2; 71.1; 4 Ezra 9.7-8; and b. Ketub. 111a. In these places the land will protect the saints from the dangers of the latter days.
28. See Davies and Allison, Matthew, Vol.2, ad loc.
29. I should like to thank W.D. Davies for his critical comments on an earlier form of this essay.

The Bible in Irish Presbyterianism,

R. Buick Knox

Presbyterianism had been planted in Ireland in the seventeenth century. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Presbyterian congregations were organized in two Synods, the Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod. The congregations were brought together in 1840 to form the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the two Synods were united to form its General Assembly. These two Synods had derived from two strands of presbyterianism in Scotland.

Presbyterianism had been established as the form of government of the Church of Scotland in 1690 after William and Mary had become King and Queen in place of the exiled King James who was Mary's father and William's uncle. The Westminster Confession of Faith was also adopted as the Church's standard statement of the teaching set in the Bible. Since then, this Confession and its accompanying Larger and Shorter Catechisms have had a similar place in many Presbyterian Churches, subordinate only to the Bible.

This Confession had been drawn up at the Assembly which began in 1643 when the English and Scottish Parliaments were trying to plan forms of government in Church and State which would replace episcopacy in both countries and also curtail the power of the monarchy. It was envisaged that the agreed form would be imposed upon the Churches in both countries and that the civil authorities would ensure conformity to the new order.

Circumstances changed in 1660 and monarchy and episcopacy were restored in full and harsh rigour in Great Britain and Ireland. The Revolution of 1688 brought William and Mary to the throne and they were firmly against enforced conformity. In Ireland, the episcopal Church of Ireland retained its established position with many privileges, but presbyterians were allowed to meet, worship and organize according to their own principles. They were also granted a state subsidy, the Regium Donum or Royal Bounty, for the upkeep of

their ministers. These ministers and their congregations were organized into presbyteries which were combined within the Synod of Ulster. This Synod adopted the Westminster Confession as its standard of Faith and required ministers to subscribe to it as the confession of their own faith. There were some ministers who, while holding the doctrines set forth in the Confession, refused to subscribe to what they called "human tests of divine truth." Presbyteries of Antrim and Dublin were formed for these non-subscribers, but they were still within the Synod of Ulster.

The Secession Synod was formed in the eighteenth century from a number of congregations founded by people who had connections with the Scottish Seceders who had broken away from the Church of Scotland in 1733. These Seceders, both in Scotland and Ireland, also accepted the Westminster Confession as their standard and they were firm in requiring ministers to subscribe it as their own confession.

In the early years of the nineteenth century there arose within the Synod of Ulster a more serious questioning of some of the teaching in the Westminster Confession, particularly its teaching on the divinity of Christ and on the Trinity. This had echoes of the Arian controversy which had troubled the Church in the fourth century. A section of the Synod's ministers and elders held that some features of the Confession did not accord with biblical teaching and they therefore had reservations about subscribing to it as the Confession of their own personal belief. Many of them were influenced by the writings and speeches of English Unitarians. This led to fierce controversy in newspapers and pamphlets and on platforms between parties led by Henry Montgomery and Henry Cooke. Cooke was the champion of the full Trinitarian doctrine and the advocate of subscription without any reservations. /1 The controversy led to a division within the Synod and its congregations. In 1829, seventeen ministers withdrew from the Synod and formed the Remonstrant Synod. This minority and the congregations which followed them eventually became organized as the Non-subscribing Presbyterian Church.

This Church has been commonly known as the Unitarian Church but it has never acknowledged this title. It claims that among its ministers and members there are those who

are Unitarians and those who are Trinitarians but it also asserts that they are all at one in refusing to subscribe to the man-made Confession and in "believing firmly that the Bible and the Bible alone should be their only rule of Faith and Duty." /2 Many of the more affluent members of the congregations in the Synod of Ulster were in this seceding minority and they were often the trustees of the churches and thus they were able to claim and keep possession of many of the old presbyterian churches. /3 Their notice-boards still proclaim that they were the First presbyterian churches in the area; this happened in Belfast, Dunmurry, Dromore, Banbridge and other places.

In this controversy there were vital doctrinal issues at stake. The residual Synod of Ulster held that it had maintained the essential Trinitarian teaching of the Bible which was set forth in the historic creeds and in the Westminster Confession of Faith. It claimed that it was the right and duty of the Church to define what it believed to be the essential teaching of the Bible and to ask its ministers for written assent thereto. At its meeting in 1834 the Synod made subscription to the Westminster Confession obligatory upon its ministers. This paved the way for union with the Secession Synod in 1840. The new General Assembly at once made the Confession its standard of doctrine. In the course of time the Assembly compiled a Rule of Faith which in its fully-developed form affirmed that in the Confession and the two Catechisms there is set forth what the Church "understands the Word of God to teach on certain important points of doctrine and worship." It also affirmed that the Word of God as set forth in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the only infallible rule of faith and practice and the supreme standard of the Church. The formula of subscription required subscribers to declare that the Confession was founded on and agreeable to the Word of God and that it was the confession of their own personal belief. /4

Shortly after the Irish union in 1840 the Church of Scotland was moving towards a further disruption. Patronage in the appointment of ministers was again an

issue. It had been festering since the earlier secession of 1733. In the course of the centuries local landowners had built and endowed churches and they secured the right to nominate ministers for these churches. This right had become a heritable possession and, despite several interruptions, the system had survived through the Reformation period and was fully restored in 1712. Patrons often had a far wider knowledge of available candidates than local parishioners could have and they had to choose from those ordained or licensed by presbyteries. In hundreds of cases the presentees of the patrons were accepted without question. However, there had recently been some very inappropriate presentations. The civil courts had compelled the Church to accept and install these presentees. Many ministers and church members became convinced that this was a gross infringement of the right of congregations to call their own ministers and they seceded and formed the Free Church of Scotland. The Irish General Assembly deplored the disruption but gave its full support to the Free Church which it said was standing for the Scriptural Principles of their reforming forefathers. /5

The Assembly took it as proven that the Church in New Testament times ordered its life by the teaching of Christ, the guidance of the Twelve and the leading of the Holy Spirit; it had to exist independent of any control by the government which at that time was the persecuting Roman Empire. However, the circumstances are rarely identical. In nineteenth-century Ireland the Presbyterian Church was not under persecution by a pagan ruler but was a tolerated minority still in receipt of the Regium Donum granted by a king whose own roots had been in the Dutch Reformed Church.

The Church thus claimed freedom from state control in its organisation, but, on the other hand, the Westminster Confession held that it was the duty of the civil magistrate to use his civil power to ensure conformity to the ordinances of God as drawn from the Bible and laid down by the Church. In 1850 a number of laymen laid before the Assembly a memorial setting forth their dissent from this statement. They held it to be an assertion to which many members of the Church could not subscribe and therefore would be unable to accept or be appointed to office in the

Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The memorial was referred to a committee which reported in 1852 that it had drawn up proposals which satisfied the memorialists. The committee said the offending words were in the Confession and could not be deleted, but it advised the Assembly to declare that it did not hold the words in the sense attributed to them by the memorialists; the Assembly should include in its formularies a definition of the sense in which it did understand them. This led to the inclusion in the Rule of Faith of the declaration that "although civil rulers are bound to render obedience to Christ in their own province, yet they ought not to attempt in any way to constrain men's religious beliefs or invade the rights of conscience." /6

Another change in circumstances came about when Gladstone, the Prime Minister, proposed a plan which he hoped would cure the resentment against the privileged position of the Church of Ireland. This resentment was felt by both Roman Catholics and Presbyterians who together made up the great majority of the Irish people. The plan provided for the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland and the disendowment of all Churches. This affected the Church of Ireland severely though it may be adjudged to have been for its good in the long run. /7 It also meant the end of the Regium Donum which provided each presbyterian minister with £70 annually. This halved their income since the average stipend was £68 and some ministers were paid far below the average. The loss could thus be devastating. To soften the blow, the government granted to each minister a compensating lump sum. To the great credit of the ministers, practically all of them commuted that sum into a central fund for their mutual benefit and for the benefit of future ministers; four hundred and seventy-two ministers surrendered £308,000 to the Fund. The benefit of that is still being reaped by presbyterian ministers. /8

There were some voices in the Assembly of 1868 who supported the change and urged the Assembly to anticipate the change by renouncing the endowment. They held it would be much more in accord with scripture and

the Gospel for ministers to depend upon the freewill offerings of the people.. They also held that the end of the subsidy would open the gates of generosity of the people. They said it would be for the ultimate good of the Church and would bring it into line with the majority of evangelical Churches in the world. The Assembly did not share this view which it rejected after twenty-four hours of debate on three successive days. It repeated the view it had expressed in 1850 that "our Christian liberty is not in any way compromised by our acceptance of a parliamentary endowment." /9 The Assembly held it to be in accord with scripture for the State to encourage the growth and influence of the Church and to provide for its needs. It was pointed out that the seventeenth-century pioneers had come from Scotland to Ireland expecting to be taken into the established Church and to receive the usual ministerial support. Many of them had indeed ministered in parish churches for some years.. The presbyterians had been much aggrieved when a firm episcopal policy brought this arrangement to an end. Their successors had welcomed the grant of the Regium Donum and their successors in their turn regretted its cessation in 1869. In course of time the Church abandoned any hope of such provision being restored and by now would look upon it as a threat to its independence, though, along with other charitable institutions, it receives some relief from taxation. /10

After the turbulent period of controversy over the doctrines relating to the Person of Christ the Presbyterian Church was ready for a period of stability and tranquillity. During the latter half of the nineteenth century the Assembly was little troubled with major doctrinal debates. Most members were content to accept the agreed position of the Bible as the source and norm of doctrine and the Confession the sound exposition of that doctrine. This calm was reinforced by the movement of Revival in 1859 which was based on Bible study and stressed the plan of salvation set forth in the Confession and Catechisms. Moreover, from 1866 to 1895 Robert Watts was the professor of Theology in the Church's college in Belfast and he was a strong champion of the Confession as the bastion of scriptural purity.

He kept at bay the contemporary challenges to the traditional position. /11

However, if the Irish Church had a time of doctrinal calm, the Churches in Scotland were being ruffled by current movements of thought and by the flood of scientific studies which raised questions about the origin and age of the universe, about the formation of the solar system in which the earth was one planet, and about the nature and destiny of the human race. Countless books appeared on the compilation of the Old and New Testaments. These studies showed how various strands of Jewish tradition had been woven together by Jewish leaders and historians to produce the Old Testament and to show therein the purpose of God for his chosen people and for all the human race. There were obviously different levels of moral and spiritual teaching in the Bible. Many readers found it difficult to grasp how some of the brutal massacres and plagues attributed to God in the Old Testament could be the actions of the God revealed in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Many were asking how the teaching of Christ could be related to the teaching of the Confession and the Catechisms that God out of his mere good pleasure had selected some to receive eternal life and thereby seemed to leave the rest of the human race to a deserved and inescapable condemnation. All these movements and questions moved the Scottish Churches to draw up Declaratory Acts defining the sense in which they held the Bible to be the Word of God and the extent to which there could be liberty of interpretation. These Acts pointed out the other strand in the Confession which stressed the gift of grace freely offered to all in the Gospel.

The United Presbyterian Church was the first to pass such an Act. This Church had as its core the descendants of the Seceders of 1733 from whom the Irish Secession Synod had been derived. In 1847 these Seceders had united with the successors of a further group of eighteenth-century Seceders. In 1879 this United Presbyterian Church affirmed in this Act that the ground of Christ's perfect sacrifice was the basis for the free offer of salvation in the Gospel to all, sufficient for all and adapted to all. It also held that there was liberty of opinion on matters not entering into the substance of the faith. /12

The Irish Church seemed to remain aloof from this turmoil. There were ministers who read much of the current spate of books and pamphlets and who even wrote letters and pamphlets on the issues but the Assembly was not seriously disturbed. Some of the ferment surfaced in the Assembly of 1900. There were a few United Presbyterian churches in Ireland and in 1900 they approached the Assembly with a view to joining the Presbyterian Church. The Assembly authorized negotiations. The United Presbyterian representatives asked for an assurance that their present and future ministers and elders would still be able to claim the benefit of the Declaratory Act. The Assembly refused to make this concession and insisted that all ministers and elders in the Presbyterian Church had to subscribe to the declaration that the Confession was agreeable to the Word and was the confession of their own belief. The negotiations proceeded no further at this stage. /13

Some members of Assembly held that there was already written into the Rule of Faith a measure of liberty which should have been sufficient to enable the United Presbyterian churches to enter the Presbyterian Church in Ireland without requiring a special concession. The Rule stressed "the inalienable right of private judgment.. and the obligation "not to refuse light from any quarter." Moreover the Rule stated that the Confession laid down what the Bible taught "on certain important points of doctrine and worship;" it did not specify what these points were and therefore did not tie ministers and elders to every detail of the Confession. This has been and remains a valuable latitude. It has enabled many ministers and elders to be at home in Irish Presbyterianism when the swirling winds of thought assailed the Church in the twentieth century. Stalwarts such as Professor Francis Petticrew upheld and even stiffened the Watts tradition, but the latitude in the Rule of Faith was sufficient to calm any agitation for a declaratory act on the Scottish lines.

Though the Church was not shaken in the latter part of the nineteenth century by doctrinal controversies which could have torn the Church apart, the Assembly's proceedings were not without times of excitement. There were occasional rumblings about the spread of rationalism and infidelity and

about the consequences of the Anglo-Catholic movement in the Church of England; all these trends were said to be a departure from the teaching of Christ and the Apostles as set forth in the Bible, but the Assembly noted that there was in England the Presbyterian Church which had not turned its back on the people or its face to graven images! /14

The hottest proceedings in the Assembly centred around the domestic issues of the use of hymns and organs in the public worship of God. It is hard for the present generation which uses a variety of musical instruments in worship and sings medleys of modern songs to take seriously the earnestness with which these issues were debated in the Assembly. The Assembly laid down the principle that God should be worshipped only by the means which he himself had provided, namely, the human voice and the psalms. The NT did say that at the Last Supper Jesus and his disciples sang a hymn but it was assumed that this was the psalm usually sung at the end of a Jewish meal. /15 In messages to American Presbyterian Churches in 1853 and 1854 the Assembly urged them to keep to the psalmody which "should not be superseded by hymns of human composition." /16 One Presbyterian Synod replied in 1855 and assured the Assembly that it had kept separate from the larger Presbyterian Churches which did not adhere to the inspired Psalter in worship. The Assembly admitted that the standard of hymn-singing was low and needed to be improved to be a worthy offering to God.

Despite declarations that the Psalms of David were the only acceptable forms of praise in public worship, many congregations, though not all, made use of the Scottish paraphrases which were tolerable as versions of the actual words of scripture. These were added to the 1879 edition of the Psalter, and five hymns were added, though these were rarely, if ever, used. Some congregations found the repertoire of hymns and paraphrases too limiting; the Assembly received petitions from Kingstown congregation in 1887 and from Elmwood in Belfast in 1888 asking for permission to use hymns but these requests were refused. In 1895 Professor Todd Martin, the convener of the Psalmody Committee, told the Assembly that the time had come for the production of a hymnbook. /17 The Committee felt

that many hymnbooks were being used for some services in various churches and therefore it was time to have a book containing hymns whose teaching was in accord with the Church's doctrine. The Assembly decided by 278 to 163 to appoint another committee to prepare the contents of a suitable book. Petticrew protested and held that the only scriptural warrant was to "sing psalms with grace in the heart;" there was no basis for a book of uninspired hymns which, in his view, was bound to undermine the regulative place of the Word of God. The committee replied that the NT did speak of "hymns and spiritual songs" and there was no evidence that these referred only to psalms. /18

The Assembly was then invited by the Free Church of Scotland to join with the other presbyterian Churches in Scotland, England and Canada in the preparation of a hymnbook. The Assembly gave a favourable response. In 1896, John McIlveen, minister of Crescent church in Belfast and convener of the hymnbook committee, reported that the Irish representatives had been warmly welcomed in the drafting committee. The Assembly voted by 331 to 242 to continue to share in the work. Petticrew again protested; he held that uninspired men had no warrant to prepare a book of uninspired hymns and no Assembly of uninspired ministers and elders could sanction an uninspired book which had no warrant in the Word of God. Moreover, when the draft list of hymns was submitted to the Assembly, Petticrew and others held that it contained pieces by "Romanists, Ritualists, Unitarians, Socinians and other errorists" and some of the pieces had "some of the worst errors of Popery." The Assembly's committee replied that authorisation of hymns did not put them on a level with the Word of God but they could contain teaching which was fully in accord with the Word of God. Moreover, Romanists and Ritualists held the great doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation and many of their hymns contained nothing but the truth. Despite an intensive campaign only 646 out of 2070 elders had been persuaded to sign a petition against taking part in the preparation of the hymnbook. / 19 In 1897 the number of protesting elders had risen to 835 but the Assembly defeated by 312 to 197 a proposal to opt out of the project. The issue was kept alive by an overture from the presbyteries

Glendermott and Limavady claiming that "the elevation of uninspired hymns to the dignity of Scripture and to the place hitherto occupied by the inspired psalms which they are expected to supplant and finally to supersede has shocked the moral sense of multitudes and grieved the hearts of noble office-bearers and people as an offence bordering on sacrilege." /20 When this overture was considered in 1898 it had lost its point since the hymnary had now been published and was on sale in editions ranging in price from two pence to four shillings and sixpence. By 1899, over one million copies had been sold in the presbyterian world. There was a steady annual sale in Ireland ranging from 10,000 to 20,000 copies.

In 1920, the project for a revision was mooted. The Irish committee regretted "the proposed revision of a book which has not yet come to its own in Ireland in the matter of general adoption," but it also advised the Assembly that it would be a fatal mistake to remain outside the project. Professor Ernest Davey of the College in Belfast, Professor R.A.S. Macalister of the National University of Ireland and Rev. James Salters, minister of Regent Street Church, Newtownards, were the Irish representatives on the editorial committee. In 1926 the proposed list of contents was before the Assembly; there was considerable criticism of the list, but the Assembly's own committee asked members of the Church to look upon the Christian truth set out in the hymns as "a jewel with many facets" and to recognize that "others-differently-minded to ourselves must be credited with sincerity and with the best of intentions in their views as to the complexion the book should take." /21 The Revised Church Hymnary appeared in 1927 and proved to be one of the finest hymnbooks produced in the twentieth century. In its first three years 39,265 copies of the words edition and 3730 of the music edition were sold in Ireland. It soon became accepted over the whole Church. It can be said of it, as was said of its predecessor, that in many congregations its rich resources have never been fully used.

A parallel and much fiercer controversy had raged over the introduction of instrumental music as an aid to singing in the public worship of God. In 1868 the Assembly was asked by the Synod of Monaghan to give a ruling on

on the issue. Harmoniums had been in use for some years in Sabbath schools and weeknight meetings but Enniskillen was a pioneering congregation in using a harmonium in the stated services of the church. The presbytery of Clogher reported the matter to the Synod which now referred it to the Assembly. It was proposed that the Assembly set up a commission to examine the question and define the law of the Church. An amendment was accepted which stated that the law was clear and there was no need for further enquiry; the innovation was a breach of the Church's practice and had no scriptural warrant. The Assembly ordered the congregation of Enniskillen to silence the instrument at once. Enniskillen refused to comply. /22 In the following years, some congregations, especially in the south and west of Ireland, introduced instruments. Year after year, the Assembly launched stern orders commanding the silencing of organs. Commissions were appointed to visit offending congregations who proved resistant to persuasion. The instrumental infection spread to many churches.

In 1872 the Assembly considered a proposal to leave the matter to "the light of nature and Christian prudence according to the general rules of the Word of God." This was opposed on the ground that it did not specify what the rules were and left the matter open to local decisions. After "protracted and very earnest discussion" this proposal was rejected by the surprisingly narrow margin of 180 to 145. A further proposal for the reiteration of the mandate that "vocal music is to be the only music in the public praises of God" produce a tied vote of 152 for and against. The Moderator suggested that the matter be left over for a year and in the meantime no congregation should introduce an instrument. This was agreed at 5.30 AM after twenty-two hours of debate. /23 In 1873 the Assembly admitted that the general standard of singing was "dark and disappointing" but "the ugly facts" were an argument for training congregations to sing and not for introducing organs. After eleven hours debate the Assembly decided to encourage congregations to improve their standard of singing. /24

During all these debates Scripture was cited again and again. One of the main arguments was that at the Last Supper when Christ and the disciples sang a hymn they had no instrumental accompaniment and this was the decisive

precedent. Over against this was the argument that the prohibition was an "unscriptural infringement of the rights and liberties of Christian people;" it was also pointed out that the Church had to take account of the whole range of Biblical teaching, and as the Bible included psalms which spoke of praising God with trumpets, strings, pipes and organs. The NT contained no condemnation of these instruments.

Each year the Assembly was assailed by petitions asking for urgent action to silence organs. In 1879, forty-five petitions were signed by 5098 persons; one from First Broughshane had 1157 signatures. In 1885, forty-eight petitions were signed by 18,592 persons. Eleven petitions, mostly from the south and west, asked for an end of the prohibition, but these were signed by only 647 persons. Petticrew had instigated and supported these petitions and he urged the Assembly to declare "the Scriptural mode of the worship of God is that observed by the Christian Church when under the guidance of the inspired Apostles in which there is no evidence that instrumental music had any place." The debate was so hot that a group of opponents of instrumental music walked out protesting that the Moderator was trying to stifle debate. They were only persuaded to return when they were promised unhindered liberty of debate. The tension was so great that it was at last agreed to postpone a further vote until 1886. In that year petitions signed by 27,376 persons were presented, but the Assembly was beginning to sense that it would be impossible to silence all organs. The issue rumbled on in Assembly after Assembly until 1892 when it was agreed by 111 to 86 to pass from the question. Attempts were made in subsequent years to revive the issue but the tide was now flowing not only for harmoniums but for pipe organs. /25 Alfred Hollins, the blind organist of St. George's Free Church in Edinburgh, crossed to Belfast on several occasions to give recital on new organs. Scriptural authority was given to the occasions by sermons on the text from Psalm 150, "Praise him with stringed instruments and organs." /26

Notes

1. J.L. Porter, The Life and Times of Henry Cooke (1875); R. Finlay Holmes, Henry Cooke (1981)
2. Statements by the officers of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, Belfast Newsletter, 29 June 1989.
3. This was arranged under the Dissenters' Chapels Act which the Irish General Assembly later described as "legalized fraud;" Minutes of the General Assembly (hereafter MGA), 1844.
4. J.M. Barkley, The Westminster Formularies in Irish Presbyterianism (1956).
5. J.H.S. Burleigh, A History of the Church of Scotland (1969), pt.IV, ch.IV
6. MGA 1850 and 1852.
7. P.M.H. Bell, Disestablishment in Ireland and Wales (1970); see my review in The Expository Times, March 1970, 174
8. MGA 1871.
9. MGA 1850, 863.
10. MGA 1868, 999
11. R. Allen, The Presbyterian College, Belfast, 1853-1953 (1954), 177-188
12. A.L. Drummond & J. Bulloch, The Church in Late Victorian Scotland (1978), 36-39.
13. MGA 1900, 993; 1901, 61-62.
14. MGA 1899, 757 & 816
15. Westminster Confession of Faith, XXI; Westminster Directory for the Public Worship of God.
16. MGA, 1853 & 1854
17. MGA 1895, 998
18. MGA 1895, 1000 & 1024; Westminster Confession of Faith, XXI. v; Col.3.16.
19. MGA 1896, 95-6 & 136ff.

- 20 MGA, 1897; 327-8 & 348; 1899, 762
- 21. MGA 1920, 1179; Reports to GA 1923, 62; 1926,66
- 22. MGA 1868
- 23. MGA 1872
- 24. MGA 1873
- 25. MGA 1886, 108-9; 1892, 317
- 26. A. Hollins, A Blind Musician Looks Back (1936),
98ff., 266

(To Be Continued)

Godly Concord: en homonoia (1. Clement 9.4)

E.A. Russell

What we propose to do in this short article is to look at some occurrences of homonoia in 1 Clement and to make some observations. The term only occurs in Apostolic Fathers in 1 Clement (on fourteen occasions) /1, in Ignatius (on seven occasions) /2 and on two occasions in the Shepherd of Hermas (Mandates 8.9; Similitudes 15.2

Perhaps the most unusual and challenging usage is that found in our heading, en homonoia. It comes in a passage where Clement is insisting on the need for repentance and makes use of Isaiah's words to give some assurance to the Church: /3 "If your sins are as scarlet they shall be as white as snow." (1.18) Then he proceeds to exhort the members of the Church directly: "Wherefore let us obey his excellent and glorious will," (translation of Kirsopp Lake in Loeb edition), urging them to fix their gaze on the heroes of the past e.g. Enoch, Noah and Abraham. /4
en homonoia:

Noah was found faithful in his service in foretelling a new beginning and through him the Master saved the living creatures which entered in concord en homonoia) into the Ark.

This was God's response to the fact that "all living things on earth were corrupt." (Gen.6.12). On the terms of the Covenant God establishes, however, members of Noah's family group are to be saved and along with them a specific number of living creatures, designated by God.
/5

Thus the corruption of people has affected the animal creation as well. Is there a suggestion that animals' qualification is bound up with human qualification? Those chosen by Noah on God's instruction alone survive. Other animals share in the corporate guilt and whether they like it or not, they perish with the guilty.

Is there then no rationality or moral sense among the animal creation? If the animals enter "in concord", is it so because of the divine instruction and they have no say in it? What God, the Creator, ordains, partakes

of homonoia? Noah's actions, unlike that of the others of the human race, are in harmony with the divine will and as the animals respond to and fulfil the divine instruction they, too, are in harmony with the divine will. Their place is bound up with that of Noah. Without this relationship with Noah they would perish like all the rest.

But is there implicit in this a suggestion of the animal creation assenting to it. The Greek word homonoia is made up of the blending of two words homos (or homoios), meaning "same" or "like" and nous meaning "mind". Together they represent "agreement" or "concord," and generally between persons. The related verb homonoieo (again, like homonoia, not found in the NT) occurs only in 1 Clement in the Apostolic Fathers and on one occasion. In Classical Greek it means "agree" or "consent". If then the animals rationally consent, we have the picture of the male and female living creatures, accepting the partner Noah has chosen and presumably nodding their heads in agreement, entering into their place in the Ark and being totally one with the wishes of the patriarch.

The ancient account does not supply us with the reason for Noah's choice except that they should be ritually clean. (so in what is called the Yahwistic narrative; cf New Jerusalem Bible, 25; N.c). It was Jewish belief prior to 100 BC /6 that all animals had spoken one language before the Fall. This presupposes surely a certain rationality. In Jubilees (in reference to the Fall; 3.28) we read:

On that day the mouth of all the beasts and cattle and birds and whatever walked or moved was stopped from speaking because all of them used to speak to one another with one speech and one language.

Note, too, that penalties are prescribed for the crimes committed by animals, e.g., "for your lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning; of every beast I will require it," (Gen 9.5); in Ex 21.28 when an ox gores a man to death, it is to be stoned.. Again. in 2 Enoch it is presumed that every animal soul will judge the human beings who have treated them badly. (58.6), but they themselves do not appear to be morally responsible - something which appears to contradict Jewish belief as well as Muslim. /7
Later, the Mishnah speaks of the trial of accused animals.

Sanhedrin, ch.1 /8

If then we are to say that the animals in some way are rational and understand right and wrong, then those who are chosen identify with Noah who responds to the Divine will. There is an interesting and perhaps relevant story to our discussion in the Testament of Job (20.7,8):

Job says: In great trouble and distress I left the city, and I sat on a dung heap worm-ridden in body....Many worms were in my body, and if a worm ever sprang off, I would take it up and return it to its original place, saying, 'Stay in the same place where you were put until you are directed otherwise by your Commander' (God)

Here then we have presented a worm which attempts to go against the purpose of God. Dr R.P. Spittler, in a comment on this passage writes: "The worm's forced compliance with its ordained role shows a touch of humour on the part of the author, who elsewhere associates animals and humans by having the cattle mourn over the death of Sitis (Job's wife)"and draws a parallel with the picture in Mark of Jesus being in the wilderness with the wild animals (Mk 1.13b). /9 Equally it seems to us there is something of the bizarre in the animals consenting to link up with a female partner and enter into the ark. Presumably there is something of the ideal in this where the fierce and violent in creation join in with the timid and vulnerable en homonoia. Isaiah speaks of wolf dwelling or feeding with the lamb (11.6; 65.25), "the calf and the lion and the fatling together...the cow and the bear shall feed;..the lion shall eat straw like the ox...They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain." (11.9). It is not however clear that such an ideal vision has any relationship with the Noah story.

1 Clement quotes widely and often with great precision from the LXX, suggesting that he had a copy of its manuscript at his disposal. /10 Sometimes he merely gives a summary of the biblical account. Yet even here in his additions we can discern where his dominant purpose lies

We are told, for example, that Lot was saved because

because of his piety and hospitality (dia philoxenian kai eusebeian 11.1). In obedience to God he fled from the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. But what about his wife? Clement writes: "She changed her mind and did not remain in agreement (en homonoia) with him." (11.2ff) Thus the concord, the homonoia had to do with the divine instruction to which Lot was obedient. The disharmony came with disobedience. Thus the family was split up and disobedience followed.

Clement's concept of homonoia is related to his view of creation. He is not, however, a profound theologian as a comparison of his writing with e.g. Paul or the Epistle to the Hebrews will show. He writes in a simple straightforward style perhaps because his purpose is more practical than theological. /11 This, however, does not mean that he cannot write impressively at times and even passionately. Of creation, he writes:

Sun and moon and the companies of the stars roll on, according to his direction (hupotagen), in harmony (en homonoia) in their appointed courses and swerve not from them at all. (20.3)

The smallest of the animals meet together in concord (en homonoia) and peace." (20.10)

All these things did the great Creator and Master of the universe ordain (prosetaxen) to be in peace and concord (homonoia) (20.11)

To get the full impact of the description it would be necessary to read this inspired and poetic discourse. It is an ideal picture. Clement is not concerned at this juncture with all the contradictions to be found within the universe. He is concerned with the positive affirmations of faith. He is so caught up with the majesty and sovereignty and greatness of God, he is not at this point concerned with spelling out the discords that permeate life. Clement addresses a specific situation and his preoccupation with harmony and concord is intended to make the divisions among the Corinthians as uncomfortable as possible.

Clement, then, avails himself of every opportunity to stress harmony but such stress only highlights of course

the disharmony, dissension or division. Such division receives great emphasis in the letter. Even though it is some forty years since Paul directed his letters to the church at Corinth (assuming 1 Clement was written about 96 AD), the tendency to division persists. That it is an intractable situation is reflected in the vehement style, language and repetition. Right at the start of his letter, Clement brings up the subject uppermost in his mind and uses the strongest language to describe the sedition (stasis). It is an abominable (miara) and unholy (anosios) sedition (stasis), "alien and foreign to the elect of God." (1.1) It expresses itself in jealousy strife and sedition, persecution and disorder (akatastasia) war and captivity. He writes: "Thus 'the worthless' (atimoi) rose up 'against those who were in honour,' those of no reputation against the renowned, the foolish against the prudent, the 'young against the old.' " (3.2,3)

The division becomes a kind of fixation with Clement. He can hardly get it out of his mind. Sometimes it is described as "schism" (schisma) (2.6; 46.5,9; 49.5; 54.2); sometimes as "sedition" (stasis) (1.1; 2.6; 3.2; 46.9; 51.3; 54.2; 57.1; 63.1); sometimes it becomes "create sedition" (stasiaze) (4.12; 43.2; 46.7; 47.6; 51.3; 55.1) Rather less frequently we have "division" (dichostasia: 46.5; 51.1) or "disorder" (akatastasia (3.2; 43.6; 14.1)).

A most interesting example of how the situation can affect the language is to be found in Clement's loose quotation or reminiscence of 1 Corinthians 13. We need only use the relevant part:

Love bears all things, is longsuffering in all
There is nothing base, nothing haughty in love.
Love has no division (schisma); love does not
make for division (stasiazei); love does every-
thing in concord (en homonoia).

It hardly needs to be said that the words underlined do not occur in 1 Corinthians 13. Indeed there is scarcely any word link with 1 Corinthians 13. /12

The word "sedition" (stasis) is deliberately chosen. Some members are in revolt against their leaders. They have gone as far as to remove leaders from office.

We have the story only as Clement hands it down to us. He makes a defence of the apostles, that they are from Christ and Christ is from God. It was the apostles who tested the first converts by the Holy Spirit and appointed them to be bishops and deacons (42.1,4). Those appointed by the apostles are their leaders, as are other eminent men appointed with the consent of the whole church. Clement stresses the grievous nature of the sin of rejecting from the episcopate those who have carried out their ministry faultlessly (amemptōs)(44.3,4,6) It is worth noting that 1 Clement regards himself as speaking through the Holy Spirit and thus often shaping what he says in response to Him and in relation to the situation. As he himself expresses it: "the things which we have written to you through the Holy Spirit (63.2)

One of the most passionate passages is to be found in chapter 46 which is worth quoting if only for its illustration of the language of division:

Why are there strife (eris) and passion (thumos) and divisions (dichostasia) and schisms(schismata) and war (polemos) among you? Or have we not one God, and one Christ, and one Spirit of grace poured out upon us? And is there not one calling in Christ? Why do we divide (dielkomen) and tear asunder (diespōmen) the members of Christ and raise up strife (stasiázomen) and reach such a pitch of madness as to forget that we are members one of another?..... Your division (schisma) has turned aside many, has cast many into discouragement, many to doubt, all of us to grief; yet your sedition (stasis) continues.

In a minority situation, the church can hardly afford the fragmenting of its members. The language of Clement reflects doubtless the urgency of the situation. This, it becomes clear, is no dead, irrelevant word from ancient times but one of stark relevance to our present day Church on all levels.

Over against this Clement does not hesitate to keep on repeating himself. He uses homonoia and links it regularly with peace: The first use of homonoia in 1 Clement is linked with the creation where "the heavens are subject to him (God) in peace" (20.1) and "the sun and moon and the companies of the stars roll on,

according to his direction, en homonoia, in their appointed courses, and swerve not from them at all." (20.3). Even the smallest animals are not exempt within this cosmic pattern: "and the smallest animals meettogether in concord and peace." (20.10). Clement concludes: "All these things did the great Creator and Master of the universe ordain to be in peace and concord." (20.11) Clement is concerned about personal godliness. He exhorts: "Let us clothe ourselves in homonoia and humility;" (30.3) "Let us hasten on to the goal of peace." (19.2).

He widens his vision to mankind and prays God, "Give concord and peace to us and to all those who dwell upon the earth;" (60.4) and extends his intercession to embrace all in authority, "and to them (earthly rulers) Lord, grant health, peace, homonoia, firmness that they may administer the government which thou hast given them without offence." (61.1)

As he draws to the close of his letter, the theme of concord surfaces once more: "You are bound to please almighty God and live in homonoia." (62.2). Equally with concord we have the stress on peace. When speaking of the messengers he has sent as witnesses and the church at Rome he writes: "We have done this that you may know that our whole care has been and is directed to your speedy attainment of peace." (63.4). And before the final grace he requests them to send back the messengers Ephebus, Valerius and Fortunatus as soon as possible and (here we quote) "that they may report the sooner the peace and concord which we pray for and desire." (65.1)

This great emphasis on concord, running through 1 Clement and treated with great seriousness, indicates something of the intractable and stubborn division that the church faces. We hear only one side of the story but some inklings are discernible of the other side. Is there perhaps a power struggle arising out of jealousy? Thus arises strife and disorder and breaking out into persecution and war. (3.2) "Thus the 'worthless' rose up 'against those who were in honour,' Those of no reputation against the renowned, the foolish against the prudent, the 'young against the old.'" (3.3) /13 Is there here then a generation gap, a revolt against the established order? Clement mentions the partisanship they had for Paul,

Cephas and Apollos in the past but this was not as blameworthy as the present parianship: They at least, Clement maintains, were people of high reputation: "it is a shameful report, beloved, extremely shameful, and unworthy of your training in Christ, that on account of one or two persons the stedfast and ancient church of the Corinthians is being disloyal to the presbyters." (47.6)

It is notable that there is no charge of immorality./14 The issue appears to have been one of church order in the matter of appointment of leaders. After an argument on leadership illustrated from the Jewish order of High, Priest, priest and Levite as having their place in the divine ministry, he goes on:

The Apostles received the Gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus the Christ was sent from God. The Christ therefore is from God and the Apostles from Christ. In both ways, then, they were in accordance with the appointed order of God's will. Having therefore received their commands, and being fully assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with faith confirmed by the word of God, they went forth in the assurance of the Holy Spirit preaching the good news (euaggelizomai) that the kingdom of God was coming. They preached from district to district, and from city to city, and they appointed their first converts, testing them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of the future believers. And this was no new method, for many years before had bishops and deacons been written of; for the scripture says thus in one place "I will establish their bishops in righteousness and their deacons in faith." (ch.42)

Thus the basis for bishops and deacons is taken from the LXX whereas the original Hebrew runs "I will make your overseers peace, and your taskmasters righteousness." (Isa 60.17). It is obvious there is no reference to the church's ministry here.

Clement claims that the apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife for the title of bishop(44.1), that they appointed "those already mentioned, and afterward added the codicil that if they should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed to their ministry." (44.2) In spite of all this the "defectors" have removed some from the ministry and the episcopate those who had done their work satisfactorily. This act Clement categorizes as "blasphemy."

Notes

1. 9.4;11.2;20.3,10,11; 21.2; 30.3;34.7;49.5;50.5;60.4; 61.1;63.2;65.1.
2. Eph 4.1,2;13.1; 1 Mag.6.1; 1 Tral 12.1; Philad 11.2
3. The quotation in verses four and five is taken word for word from the Septuagint of Isaiah 1. 16-20; this is only one example of a number in 1 Clement.
4. 1 Clement notably has many reminiscences of the Epistle to the Hebrews eg 9.2ff; 10.7; 12.1; 17.1ff; 19.2 and in particular chapter 36.
5. On the composition of the narrative in chapters six and seven of Genesis cf. the New Jerusalem Bible ad loc; also commentaries
6. We are indebted to R.H. Charles, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the NT Vol II (Oxford 1963), 464 n.5 for an important note on the matter of animals' rationality including existence in a future world viz Egypt where animals were deified; Greek metempsychosis ie the soul of an animal at death being transferred into a new body of the same or other form; speculations that they were rational (Chrysippus) or the human and animal souls were alike (Sextus Medicus).
7. See the superb The OT, Pseudepigrapha, Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments, Vol I (Darton, Longman & Todd 1983), edited by Jas H. Charlesworth 186, Note e
8. See Charlesworth op.cit.
9. See article on "The Testament of Job" in Charlesworth, op.cit. Vol I, 848, Note g.
10. See N.3
11. Cf J.B. Lightfoot, Apostolic Fathers, Vol I, Pt 1, (1890), 396
12. A comparison with 1 Cor 13 shows only a very slender link in Clement. The phrase "love bears all things" appears out of place while "bears" in Clement reflect anechetai where it is stegei in Paul (Cl 49.5; 1 Cor

7); makrothumei (suffers long) is used by both; "nothing base" (ouden banauson) appears related to ouk aschēmonei (Does not behave unseemly) while "nothing haughty" (ouden hyperēphanon) may be linked with "is not puffed up"(AV) (ou phusioutai). These appear to be the only links. Clement goes on to attach the phrases which reflect the church's division.

13. Cf 1 Cor 1.26-29.

14 The term used in 35.5 which appears to reflect Rom. 1.29-32 can be used to describe the conditions which make for division: covetousness ie someone else's power; strife ie about leadership; so for malice or fraud, perhaps especially gossiping and evil-speaking; hatred of God may be nothing more than a difference of opinion about what God requires in the matter of leadership; pride and arrogance and vain-glory are inseparable from place-seeking; similarly we can explain inhospitality.

Addendum

Central to Clement's argument is the weight he places on the Old Testament, as true, given by the Holy Spirit with nothing unjust or counterfeit in it (45.2). . As for NT writers usually, the OT is the LXX. He drives home his point to the troublemakers by often long quotations; on jealousy (3-6) or repentance (7-8) (Why does he not use the summary of Jesus' preaching where repentance is central; cf Matthew 3.2;5.17 ?) or obedience ie to what Clement thinks is proper understanding of the conditions of leadership. Is his own position of bishop threatened (assuming he is a bishop)? The sources of his information apart from the LXX appear very limited, though, as noted above, Hebrews is referred to often whether directly or by reminiscence. He does not confine himself to the so-called Palestinian Canon but brings in the book of Wisdom (3.4;27.5); Sirach (cf 60.1;59.3) and Judith (59.3; 65.4)

It is doubtful if Paul would be happy with the phrasing that Lot and Rahab were saved by faith and hospitality (11.1;12.1) though no doubt the writer of the epistle of James would. The second coming has fallen into the background (but cf 42.3;50.3). The word parousia does not

occur. He uses the Suffering Servant passage of Isaiah 53 merely as an example of humility (Ch.16). The term euaggelion (Gospel), so characteristic of Paul, occurs on only one occasion while three out of five references to sotēriōn (salvation) are citations from the Psalms: 18.12(Ps 51); 15.6 (Ps 12); 35.12 (Ps 50). The great word "reconcile"(katallassō), found in 2 Cor 5 in particular and so suitable for a divided church does not appear

Unusually, in reference to the death of Christ, Clement writes: "Let us fix our gaze (atenizō, a term familiar to readers of Acts where it occurs on ten occasions) on the blood of Christ, and let us know that it is precious to his Father because it was poured out for our salvation."(7.4) (cf 1 Peter 1.19); the Lord Jesus Christ whose blood was given for us (21.6). Cl. does not use the word "Cross" (stauros) nor the verb "crucify" (stauroō). How much does he know of the Corinthian writings? His treatment of the resurrection is astonishing for its inadequacy if he knew 1 Cor 15, not to speak of the strange introduction of the story of the Phoenix (chs 24 & 25)

Going on the basis of 1 Clement, the writer knows little or nothing of the teaching of Jesus or if he does, he does not use it. Elements of the "Sermon on the Mount" appear in chapter 13 (the parallelism in the phrasing, making for easy memorisation is noteworthy):

Be merciful, that you may obtain mercy.

Forgive, that you may be forgiven.

As you do, so shall it be done unto you.

As you give, so shall it be given to you.

As you judge, so shall you be judged.

As you are kind, so shall kindness be shown to you.

With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you.

The other references are: to the sower going forth, linked with the resurrection (ch.24); to the warning of Jesus addressed to those who offend little ones. (ch.46) Occasionally the words of the OT writer are put in the mouth of Jesus (Ch.22 & Ps.34.11-17)

New Testament Apocalyptic in Twentieth Century
Discussion

Hamilton Moore

At the beginning of this century J. Weiss and Albert Schweitzer affirmed that Jesus was strongly influenced by Jewish apocalyptic and indeed that his proclamation of the kingdom and understanding of his mission were constitutively stamped with the characteristics of apocalyptic. /1 This view was in total contrast with the prevailing non-eschatological and spiritual understanding of the kingdom of God among earlier nineteenth century Protestant theologians. /2

Weiss on his part criticized Ritschl's understanding of the kingdom, with its emphases on the activity of men in building that kingdom, rather than on the activity of God. Instead of being advanced by the work of men, Weiss perceived the kingdom as involving the interruption of God as king into history. Contrary to Ritschl, he did not understand Jesus as intending to make a beginning of something that would develop into a moral organisation of humanity for this suggests a continuity of history in which the coming of Jesus marks the beginning of a new epoch. Rather for Weiss Jesus was conscious that he stood at the end of the world and of history. What lay ahead was the consummation of all things in which God would be all in all. The background to Jesus' understanding was to be found in the teaching of prophetic and apocalyptic Judaism.

Following Weiss's contribution, Schweitzer gave to Jesus an even greater apocalyptic understanding and interpretation. The kingdom of God in Jesus' teaching was an apocalyptic concept and its coming was expected in the immediate future. /3 The ethical teaching of Jesus was only an interimsethik, showing what was involved in true repentance and valid only for the short time before the kingdom arrived. /4 According to Schweitzer Jesus knew himself to be the designated Messiah, the one who would be revealed as the Son of Man when the kingdom came. When this failed to happen Jesus was determined to force its coming. Therefore he went to Jerusalem to his death, seeking to fulfil the messianic woes in his own person,

thus bringing in the kingdom and with it his manifestation as Son of Man. /5

Perrin /6 has explained that while Schweitzer's work was inferior to that of Weiss, yet because it was concerned with a subject of general interest at that time, i.e., the life of Christ, interpreting it in apocalyptic terms, it had an impact greater than that of Weiss who restricted himself to the teaching of Jesus. Thus it could not fail to reach a wide public and arouse an interest to which NT scholars must respond. Much of that response was an attempt "to escape from, or at least soften" /7 Weiss' and Schweitzer's presentation of the apocalyptic Jesus. Perrin outlines the response particularly in the English speaking world. /8 While at first many scholars had to bow before the force of Schweitzer's theory, they eventually came to terms with it by affirming that although Jesus had taken over certain elements from contemporary Jewish apocalyptic, he profoundly changed them and gave them a new spiritual meaning. /9 Subsequently this "transformation of apocalyptic" gave way for a period to the "denial" of apocalyptic /10 and then the eventual "triumph" of apocalyptic in the 1930s, which involved the recognition of the kingdom of God as an apocalyptic concept in the teaching of Jesus and the attempt to go on from there to seek to establish its significance for him /11 Perrin proceeds to highlight the great influence of Dodd in this discussion. /12

Dodd maintained that the concept of the kingdom of God was employed by Jesus in different ways. /13 It was used first of all in a way parallel to the usage of the rabbis i.e., the kingdom of God is realized in human experience by submission to the divine will. Again, the term is found as in prophetic-apocalyptic use i.e., in an eschatological sense. But also there are sayings which do not fall within this framework, sayings reflecting the prophetic-apocalyptic use of the kingdom but with this difference, the "eschatological" kingdom of God is proclaimed as a present fact which men must recognize whether by their actions they accept or reject it. It is this last group of sayings which Dodd takes as Jesus' unique contribution. The emphasis falls on the presence of the kingdom in his own person and ministry i.e., realized eschatology. /14

This approach has been very influential in Britain especially, and according to Tupper /15 much of Anglo-American NT exegesis throughout the first half of the century can be summarized as resistance to the thorough-going apocalyptic Jesus of Schweitzer and attraction to the realized eschatology of Dodd.

As far as German NT scholarship was concerned Koch /16 explains that in the years following Weiss and Schweitzer there appears to have been a greater readiness to admit an apocalyptic stamp for Paul and the early church than for Jesus. Around the time of the first world war apocalyptic ceased to be of 'topical interest and the rabbinic writings pushed themselves more and more to the fore in the search for the background to the NT. Where the special character of apocalyptic was admitted at all it was declared to be the esoteric property of the scribes. For Jesus and primitive christianity the result was a modified prophetic theory. /17 Even when in the period salvation history was discovered to be the centre of the NT faith and Jesus was seen at the centre of time between creation and the end, /18 "no one", according to Koch, "investigated a relationship to a possible understanding of history on the part of the preceding apocalyptic. On the contrary, importance was attached to the fact that the NT view is 'radically different' from that of Judaism in its global aspect." /19 However, among many NT scholars who viewed apocalyptic with suspicion and mistrust, there were a few who continued to accept apocalyptic as having an importance of its own for the NT and for interpreting Jesus. One such was Bultmann who was convinced through the earlier work of Weiss of Jesus' apocalyptic conception of the coming of the kingdom of God. However, as Bultmann explains, the fulfilment of history in the arrival of the kingdom of God failed to appear. "History did not come to an end as every schoolboy knows, it will continue to run its course." /20 Tupper /21 has pointed out that Bultmann's conviction concerning Jesus' unfulfilled hope for the eschatological kingdom of God illumined for him the mythological character of Jesus' apocalyptic eschatology and the mythical element in the NT's world view. This propelled Bultmann into the

program of demythologizing which attempted to discover the deeper meaning behind the mythological conceptions of the NT, a meaning which called men to decision. Apocalyptic therefore played an important role for Bultmann as far as Jesus and the NT was concerned but in a completely negative way.

In 1960 Ernest Käsemann published his essay, "The Beginnings of Christian Theology" /22 which helped to spark off a revived interest in apocalyptic. According to Käsemann, Jesus' ministry was bracketed between the apocalyptic expectations of John the Baptist on the one hand and the eschatological hopes of the early Christians on the other; but while taking his start from the apocalyptically determined message of the Baptist, Jesus' own preaching "was not constitutively stamped by apocalyptic, but proclaimed the immediate nearness of God." /23 The apocalyptic statement on the lips of Jesus in the Synoptic tradition reflects the reversion to apocalyptic by the early Christians, under the influence of the Easter-event and the coming of the Spirit. Therefore "Apocalyptic - since the preaching of Jesus cannot really be described as theology- was the mother of all Christian theology." /24 Arriving at this position Käsemann focussed his attention on certain texts in Matthew's Gospel, and here found evidence of a vigorous Jewish-Christian group within the early church, led by prophets and marked by strong apocalyptic traits. /25 He claimed, "We block our own access to the earliest Easter kerygma if we disregard its apocalyptic context," /26 and concludes, "My own claim is that post-Easter apocalyptic is the oldest variation and interpretation of the kerygma." /27

What of this "oldest form" and "variation" as time passed? Käsemann claimed that the apocalyptic theology collapsed when the expected parousia failed to occur, and as Christianity spread beyond Palestine Hellenistic enthusiasm transformed apocalyptic to such an extent that it abandoned any kind of future hope. /28 For example, the Corinthian enthusiasts whom Paul contends with, believed that the goal of redemption had already been attained with baptism and the redeemed were risen and enthroned with Christ in heavenly existence. An expectation of the parousia was meaningless because everything that

apocalyptic still hoped for appeared to them to have been realized. Paul represents a mid-point between post-Easter apocalyptic and Hellenistic enthusiasm. According to Käsemann Paul sought to maintain a futurist eschatology and the apostle's anti-enthusiastic battle was "in the last and deepest analysis fought out under the banner of apocalyptic." /29 Paul understands that those who are christian, "already deliver over to Christ in bodily obedience the piece of world which they themselves are, they testify to his lordship as that of the cosmocrator and thereby provide an anticipatory sign of the ultimate future, of the reality of the resurrection and the unrestricted regnum Christi." /30 Käsemann maintained that even Paul's central doctrine of justification was derived from apocalyptic, for ultimately it is concerned with the rule of God and his triumph in the world. "Pauline eschatology.....centres round the question whether God is indeed God and when he will fully assert himself as such. (Pauline theology)..proclaims the sovereignty of God in apocalyptic." /31

So Käsemann argued for a profound indebtedness of christian theology to post-Easter apocalyptic. Its central motive was the hope of the epiphany of the Son of Man coming to his enthronement, and he maintained "it is a question whether christian theology can ever make do or be legitimate without this motive which arose from the expectation of Easter and determined Easter faith." /32

Käsemann's understanding has aroused much attention and debate. Such a standpoint was not expected from a pupil of Bultmann and he had stated his view in a much more radical form than any other writer had done. As Koch has explained, "Up to then apocalyptic had been for biblical scholarship something on the periphery of the Old and New Testaments - something bordering on heresy. Käsemann had suddenly declared that a tributary was the main stream from which everything else at the end of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New was allegedly fed." /33

Travis outlines some of the criticisms which have been made of Käsemann's view. /34 First, he mentions Ebeling /35 who in a critique published a year after

Käsemann claimed that if primitive christianity was as indebted to Jewish apocalyptic as Käsemann maintains, it is surprising that the christian production of apocalypses was a late development. "It is no accident that the characteristic literary form of Christianity was the gospel and not the apocalypse." /36 Käsemann also has not taken enough account of the way apocalyptic ideas have themselves been changed through their link with Jesus. We should not "merely interpret Jesus in the light of apocalyptic, but also and above all interpret apocalyptic in the light of Jesus," /37 and how could the supposedly non-apocalyptic preaching of Jesus be followed by the apocalyptic preaching of the early church as a response to his life and message?

Fuchs believes Käsemann has minimized the element of "realized" eschatology in primitive christianity. He asks, "Is the primitive christian expectation not at once combined with the proclamation of the already accomplished heavenly enthronement of Jesus as the Son of Man, that is, of the crucified Christ as the world judge (Acts 2.36)?"

/38 For Fuchs even if apocalyptic was the initial form of christian response, that does not prove it to be a permanently valid response. The main difference between Fuchs and Käsemann, as Travis has pointed out, is that the former criticizes apocalyptic for expressing itself in terms of propositional truths, while he believes that revelation cannot be identified with propositional truths. /39 Käsemann, writing in response to Fuchs was more than sceptical towards this position, "preaching, confession, and even hermeneutics without stated truths, and even without 'conceptions' - what is that supposed to mean?" /40

We may add that while Fuchs' objection to Käsemann's outline of the history of early christian tradition and language was raised out of a linguistic-theological defence against all propositional truths, Conzelmann directs his attack from precisely the opposite direction. Theology always has to do with concrete sober doctrine and therefore he is disturbed by the apocalyptic enthusiasm which Käsemann ascribes to the members of the primitive church. He finds a lack of evidence in the texts. Instead he finds credal formulations like the ancient tradition in 1 Cor. 15 which clearly pass on the faith in the form of

doctrine. "These, not apocalyptic fantasies or spiritual experience...are the wellspring of christian theology." /41

Travis also outlines Rollins' criticisms of Käsemann's approach. /42 He suggests that the use of texts from Matthew is arbitrary; nowhere does he present arguments to justify his claim that these texts reflect the theological tensions of the earliest church. What evidence we have (e.g., from 1 Cor.15) suggests that the earliest form of the kerygma did not use apocalyptic concepts such as Son of Man and Parousia. For Rollins, even if the texts cited by Käsemann indicate the existence of an apocalyptic "strand" or apocalyptic groups in the primitive church, they hardly demonstrate that apocalyptic was the controlling theological attitude of the earliest church. It was "not the mother of all christian theology, but at best one of many brothers, whose particular brand of theology would have stood in obvious tension with the teaching of Jesus and the theology of the earliest church." Changing the metaphor, Rollins suggests that the role of apocalyptic was not that of mother but midwife. The Christ-event itself was what produced the theologies of the first Christians; Jewish apocalyptic supplied only a mode of conceptualizing the Christ-event./44 Also in proclaiming Jesus as Messiah the early church reclaimed history and the world as the locus of God's self-disclosure, thus displacing the pessimism of Jewish apocalypticism. Rollins interprets this as "a tacit rejection of Jewish apocalyptic eschatology and a return to prophetic Heilsgeschichte." /45 Again from the earliest beginnings he sees in the church opposition to apocalyptic. According to Rollins what should surprise is not that we find apocalyptic material in the NT, but that we find so little of it. None of this material can be traced to the earliest church and even within the apocalyptic sections there are some "anti-apocalyptic elements" such as the rejection of calculation of the end by means of signs (Mk 13.32; Lk 17.20f). Therefore, "one can speak of the apocalypticism of the NT only with extreme caution." /46 Criticisms like these are impressive and must be given serious consideration.

We must agree with Ebeling when he reminds us to take note of how apocalyptic ideas have been altered through their link with Jesus, and also how difficult it is to see the apocalyptic preaching of the early christians as a response to a supposedly non-apocalyptic Jesus. Again we accept Fuchs' warning not to minimize the "realized" eschatology of primitive christianity, and Conzelmann's support for concrete doctrine. We may acknowledge also with Rollins our doubts concerning the claims Käsemann makes for certain texts in Matthew and add our own assent to his insight that the Christ-event itself was what produced the theologies of the early Christians - yet we may still feel apocalyptic has a more influential place in early christianity than some of these scholars are willing to allow.

Notes

1. J. Weiss, Die predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes (Göttes, 1892)
A. Schweitzer, Geschichte der Leben-Jesu Forschung (1906)
2. Two examples of the spiritual understanding are (1) Schleiermacher, Die Christliche Glaube (ET 1928); for Schleiermacher the kingdom of God is the corporate human God- consciousness which is the existence of God in human nature and which comes into being as a result of Christ's God-consciousness (164.1) (2) A. Ritschl, Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung (1888); Ritschl criticized Schleiermacher for not having done justice to the theological nature of the kingdom of God as the Divine end. Arising out of redemption (the other focal point of christianity) the kingdom is the moral organization of humanity through actions inspired by love.
3. op.cit., 238
4. ibid., 352
5. Ibid., 386
6. N. Perrin, The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus (London 1963), 34f
7. J. Dunn, Unity and Diversity in the New Testament (London 1977) 316.
8. Op.cit., 33ff
9. Perrin cites as one example W. Sanday, The Life of Christ in Recent Research; "The Apocalyptic Element in the Gospels, Hibbert Journal 10(1911) 83-109
10. Perrin makes reference to the "Symposium of Eschatology written by a representative group of scholars and published in JBL 41 (1922) 1-204. Contributors were K. Fullerton, N. Schmidt, L. Ginzberg, E.F. Scott and B.W. Bacon. Scott maintained that underlying the apocalyptic element in the teaching of Jesus was a practical religious purpose which meant more to him than the

forms in which he articulated it. The function of the apocalyptic teaching "is to enforce a message which is not apocalyptic....He demand was for a new kind of life, a new relation to God..." 138

11. Perrin claims that the "triumph" of apocalyptic can be seen in papers presented to a conference of six English and six German theologians held at Canterbury in 1927 called to discuss the nature of the kingdom of God and its relation to human society. These papers were published in Theology 14 (1927), 249-295. Among the four scholars who concerned themselves particularly with the NT and the teaching of Jesus there was absolute unanimity in regarding the kingdom of God as an apocalyptic concept. One of these scholars was C.H. Dodd.
12. The numerous contributions of Dodd on the subject include the following: "The This-Worldly Kingdom of God in our Lord's teaching," Theology 14 (1927), 258-260; "The Gospel Parables," "The Kingdom of God has come," ExpT 48 (1936-37) 138-142; The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments (London 1936); The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel (1953)
13. e.g., Parables, 34-44
14. In later years Dodd hinted at certain modifications to his view. See The Coming of Christ (Cambridge 1951); following J. Jeremias' The Parables of Jesus, (London 1954), Dodd appears to have agreed to the description of the emphasis of Jesus as "an eschatology that is in process of realization," 159; See Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, 447 N1.
15. E.F. Tupper, "The Revival of Apocalyptic in Biblical and Theological Studies," Review and Expositor Vol LXXII No 3 (1975) 286.
16. K. Koch, The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic, (London 1972), 58f.
17. Koch points out that it is this conviction which lies behind Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch zum NT, "a work which like no other moulded the understanding of the NT for whole generations of theologians and in which apocalyptic is hardly given separate treatment at any point." *ibid*, 60. (There is a difference with articles which appear after 1960).
18. O. Cullmann, Christ and Time, (London 1951)
19. *Op.cit.*, 61
20. R. Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology," Kerygma and Myth Vol. I, ed. By H.W. Bartsch (ET London 1953), 5
21. *Op.cit.*, 288.
22. E. Käsemann, "The Beginnings of Christian Theology," JTC 6 NYork 1969), 40ff
23. *Ibid.*, 40
24. *Ibid.*, 40
25. S. Travis, Christian Hope and the Future of Man, (Leicester 1980), 42ff. Travis summarized (1) a theology of history which sees the history of salvation and the history of damnation running parallel to each other, which divides history into "clearly distinguishable epochs." (2) ethical

exhortations which appeal to an eschatological ius talionis (i.e. the principle of "an eye for an eye.") (3) expectation of a transformation of values in the last days; (4) re-establishment of the twelve tribes at the parousia; (5) confirmation of the Mosaic law and opposition to the gentile mission; (6) hope of the epiphany of the Son of Man coming to his enthronement and near expectation of the parousia.

26. "On the Topic of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," JTC (1969). 106.
- 27/29 Ibid., 107 N.5 28. Ibid. 1119 29. Ibid. 127
30. Ibid. 133
31. "An Apologia for Primitive Christian Eschatology," Essays on NT Themes, (ET, London 1964), 182.
32. JTC, 46
- 33/4. 33: Op. cit. 14 34. Op.cit. 43ff
35. G. Ebeling, "The Ground of Christian Theology," in JTC 6, NYork 1969), 47ff.
- 36/37. 36. Ibid., 53. 37. Ibid, 58
38. E. Fuchs, "On the Task of a Christian Theology," JTC 6, (NYork 1969), 72
39. Ibid. 81f
40. "On the Topic of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," 113.
41. H. Conzelmann, "Zur Analyse der Bekenntnisformel 1 Cor.15. 3-5, Ev. Th. 25 (1965), 9.
42. W.G. Rollins, "The New Testament and Apocalyptic," NTS 17 (1970-1971), 454ff.
- 43/45. 43: Ibid 468. 44. Ibid. 472 45. Ibid 473.
46. Ibid. 475